



PERMANENT MISSION OF THE HOLY SEE
TO THE ORGANIZATION FOR SECURITY
AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE

**STATEMENT BY MONSIGNOR MICHAEL W. BANACH,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE HOLY SEE,
AT THE 899th MEETING OF THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

26 JANUARY 2012

RE: HOLOCAUST REMEMBRANCE DAY

Mister Chair,

Remembering is a duty and a common responsibility. This is especially true in the case of the Holocaust. And that is why tomorrow we pause and celebrate *Yom Hashoah*, or Holocaust Remembrance Day.

The responsibility of all nations to remember gains new strength as we celebrate the 67th anniversary of the liberation of the atrocious extermination camps.

As Pope Benedict XVI has stated: *“The hatred and contempt for men, women and children that was manifested in the Shoah was a crime against God and against humanity. This should be clear to everyone, especially to those standing in the tradition of the Holy Scriptures, according to which every human being is created in the image and likeness of God. It is beyond question that any denial or minimization of this terrible crime is intolerable and altogether unacceptable....[T]he Shoah must be a warning for all against forgetfulness, denial or reductionism, because violence committed against one single human being is violence against all”* (Address to Members of the Delegation of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, 12 February 2009) .

This terrible chapter in our history must never be forgotten. Remembrance, it is rightly said, is *memoria futuri*, a warning to us for the future, and a summons to strive for reconciliation. To remember is to do everything in our power to prevent any recurrence of such a catastrophe within the human family by building bridges of lasting friendship.

Holocaust Remembrance Day invites us to reflect deeply on the significance of the *Shoah*. The victims from their graves, and the survivors through the vivid testimony of what they have suffered, have become a loud voice calling the attention of all of humanity. To remember this terrible experience is to become fully conscious of the salutary warning it entails: the spoiled seeds of anti-Judaism and anti-Semitism must never again be allowed to take root in any human heart.

The Holy See is profoundly and irrevocably committed to continue working in this sense.

Thank you, Mister Chair.